



EAST RUTHERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

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February 11, 2022

Dear East Rutherford School Community:

On Monday, February 7th, Gov. Phil Murphy announced during a COVID-19 media briefing that the state of New Jersey would not be renewing the public health emergency status when it expires on March 7, 2022. With that declaration, it was also specified that masks would no longer be required in schools and childcare centers across the State. The East Rutherford School District will adopt the “mask-optional” status beginning on March 7, 2022.

The Governor said he made the decision because of the recent dramatic decrease in the reported number of COVID cases and related hospitalizations throughout New Jersey. In East Rutherford, we will continue to monitor those factors as well as input from local medical experts and the [COVID-19 Activity Level Index](#).

The East Rutherford School District has conferred with experts engaged in our District Medical Team in anticipation of the Governor’s announcement, and we have reached consensus that a mask-optional policy makes sense so long as the case numbers remain low and conditions stay the same or improve. We will continue to monitor health and safety data as we navigate the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, it is imperative that parents continue to keep the school nurses up to date about any confirmed or potential COVID exposures and cases, as well as any case of illness that a student may be experiencing. The safety protocols are what have brought us to this point, and we will continue to rely on them to make informed decisions on behalf of our students and staff.

While the East Rutherford School District awaits further guidance in regards to social distancing, contact tracing, quarantine timeframes, and other COVID-19 related procedures, please note that there is no additional information available at this time. The Governor indicated that additional updates are forthcoming, and as the New Jersey Department of Health provides that guidance, the District will continue to adjust procedures and communicate that information to the community in a timely fashion.

If there is ever a time where conditions warrant a change, masks may again be required in East Rutherford schools. If masks are required, we would first look to individual classes, grade levels, or schools – with the last resort being returning to a districtwide mask mandate. As always, we will strive to make the best decisions for the well-being and safety of our entire school community.

Here’s to hope that with spring’s warmer weather, we can get back to a bit of normalcy. Thank you for your patience as we work together toward March 7th and the days that lie ahead.

Sincerely,

Giovanni A. Giancaspro

Superintendent of Schools